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AUTHOR Calitri, Charles J.
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ABSTRACT

English has often been considered the most difficult of subjects to teach because of the wide range of its content, which may include grammar, composition, speech, literature, reading, dramatics, library, semantics, and communication. This essay presents a model for solving the problem of finding a coherent, inclusive, and manageable way of approaching language arts instruction. The model, outlined in diagram form and discussed in detail, deals with four major skills of language use--listening and reading (the impressive or ingressive process) and speaking and writing (the expressive process); with four aspects of motive for language use--autistic, communicative, analytic, and aesthetic; and with four ways in which the teacher can involve students--inducive, inductive, deductive, and correlative. The structure can be entered into at any stage of student development; the stages are cumulative and intermingled. (JM)

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A STRUCTURE FOR THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE ARTS

Charles J. Calitri

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY
Hempstead, New York

CS 203 325

A STRUCTURE FOR THE TEACHING OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS

English has been called the most difficult of subjects to teach because of the wide range of its content. What is probably also true is that any language teacher involved in the teaching of his or her own language to other native users of that language will be confronted with the same difficulty. This is inevitable because the "language" is both the subject being taught and the medium in which the teaching is done.

Grammar, composition, speech, literature, reading, dramatics, journalism, library, semantics and communication are all included within the province of the English teacher, with occasional excursions permitted to a reading specialist, a journalism class, a speech correction person, or a speech-drama department which also produces the school plays. English classrooms are the places where, if it is done at all on the secondary level, discussions of philosophy, psychology, the humanities, hobbies and vocations and social behavior are all part of the content.

The problem, then, is the finding of some coherent, inclusive, manageable way of approaching the teaching of the language arts that will avoid either the sharp cleavages that occur when the English teacher moves from one area to another, or the diffused, intangible and therefore unsatisfying atmosphere which pervades when we try to do them all together, with no sense of an underlying structure. The synoptic model offered here is one attempt to solve the problem.

If we recognize that the English classroom is first of all a place where teacher and students meet in order that certain development in language use will occur in the students, then we are prepared to acknowledge that the central core of such a class is the way man uses language, all the ways man uses language. The first delimitation may be the way human beings use the English language; second, the way we use it; and third, the way you use it (we being class, and you being individual, including I).

There are four major skills of language use: listening and reading, speaking and writing. The first two, listening and reading, can be grouped into a single process, called Impressive or Ingressive, because in both cases a human being takes into the brain through the senses certain impulses which can be translated into meanings. The second two, speaking and writing, can be grouped together into a process called Expressive, because the direction of movement is from meaning into noise and finger manipulation. This distinction of the two processes does not imply that one is passive and the other active, a notion which is manifest even in the grammatical categorization of

verbs and which has made many audiences sit back and say to an orchestra, or a book, "Here I am, amuse me."

When one listens one takes from the sound waves, differentiated in space-time according to loudness and stridency, those combinations of noises which the human ear is capable of receiving. Some of the impulses affecting the aural nervous system are carried to the brain where they are "read," which means they are turned into meaning. We can only speculate as to the manner in which the human organism accomplishes this task, but theorists suggest that there must be a perceiving, a recognizing, an associating, a categorizing, and an evaluating, in order for understanding to take place. And these must be done with interconnections among brain cells which have at prior times been excited by sound impressions in relation with other sensory impulses such as sight, touch, taste, smell and the whole range of proprioceptivities (the ability of the organism to locate itself, and sub-members of itself, in space and time)

Much the same happens when the impulses are taken in through the eyes or the fingers (in Braille, for example) and are turned into meanings. The experiences which make the Impressive or Ingressive process possible at any point have brought about what we call learning, in very small stages.

Speaking and writing are the results of brain production where meanings are transformed, again by complicated nervous system processes which we cannot yet describe, into motor behavior of the speech organs: lungs, throat, mouth, nose and lips; or by the writing organs: muscles, ligaments and bones of the hands and fingers. And it does not matter that speech can be tooled into microphones, or writing into type, both being extensions of the human motor system.

To accomplish even rudimentary tasks in these skills, the human being must acquire certain learnings. A baby's eardrums can be activated by sound, but it has to learn to hear and then to listen. A baby's eyes can be stimulated by lights and shadows; it learns to see. Long before school begins, or even before crawling begins, a child has learned to "read" what its eyes and its ears, its skin and its nostrils and its tongue have experienced together in a million different combinations. It learns to give meaning to mother's smile or scowl, to a sibling's coo or snarl, and these are the beginnings of the Impressive or Ingressive process. It learns to raise its arms with purpose, to grasp and release, to move its hands in a directed way toward something it wants. It learns to make sounds toward some end, because accidental gurglings have become associated with sensory results, so that a cry which may have been, at first, an involuntary expelling of air through a restricted larynx, becomes the means by which the child expresses the idea in its brain that has occurred because the skin under the diaper feels wetness and the sting of acid.

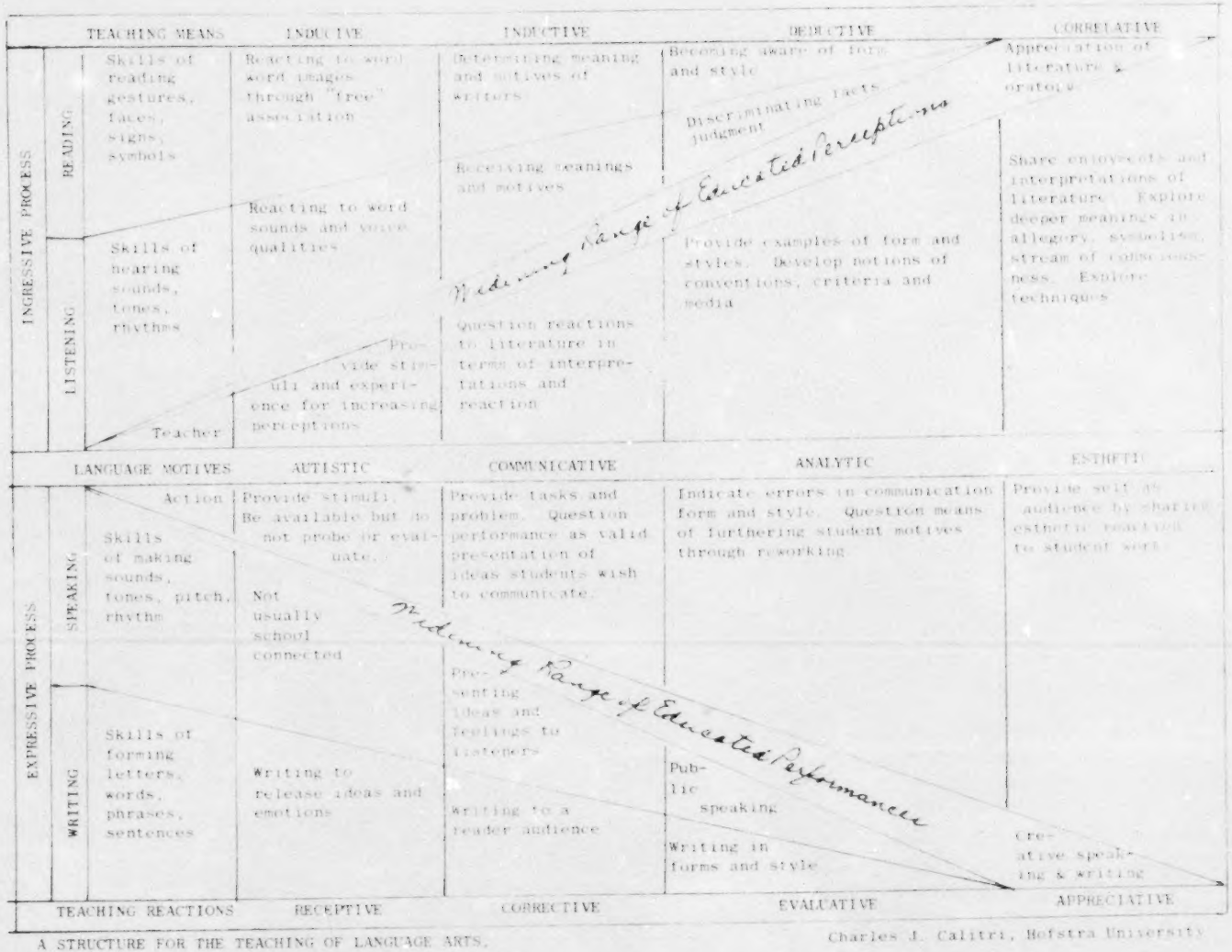
Eventually the child comes to discern more solid patternings between his nervous system and the world. Doing with the fingers and the voice are the Expressive processes, already highly complex and capable of being understood by those outside the child's self, providing they, in turn, have learned to read the signals.

Besides the two processes and the four skills of language use, we must consider the motives which originate with the user. And again we must acknowledge that those motives result from innumerable combinations of external and internal experiences which include not only what has happened to a human being in its living, but what its particular nervous system has done with the events it has lived. The motives for language use can be divided into four aspects. We can see them as stages of development and as qualities in combination at any particular moment beyond the first stage. These motives are called autistic, communicative, analytic and esthetic.

Autistic language use includes what Piaget has called Egocentricity that is, a use of language that does not have as its motive the desire to affect any one but the user. There is no desire to make a message, to transfer a feeling or a thought from one brain to another. There is only the desire to make sound or to move fingers with a pencil in them for the joy of such behavior. We "like to hear ourselves talk." And a baby delights in gurgling and babbling. We "write love letters in the sand." And a baby scribbles. (There are some who would call this kind of behavior "sick" at all times when indulged in by an adult. There are others who see it as one kind of self-amusement or release, not necessarily indicative of serious illness, unless it has become uncontrolled.)

If we are convinced that self-knowledge is a primary ingredient of growth, then for the teacher of the language arts the autistic motive presents an opportunity to involve students in a study of self-awareness. "What do your eyes see? What do your ears hear? What does your skin feel?" If we draw a circle on the blackboard with a dot at its center and ask our students to focus their eyes on the dot and tell us what their eyes see, they will usually report things that are inside the circle. They will see eraser marks, shadows. They will not report the rest of the blackboard, the teacher, the chalk tray, the heads of the students in front of them. When we call attention to "what else they see," we are making them actively aware of their own perceptions. If we ask them to keep their eyes fixed on the dot while we walk toward the back of the room, and to raise their hands when we pass out of their range of vision, we help them to <u>realize</u> that the eyes see more than 180 degrees. We can help them to understand the nature of attention, of focus, and of periphery in that way.

If we suddenly refer to planes overhead during the reading of a poem or to the sound of someone walking in the hall when they are


TEACHING MEANS
INDUCTIVE
INDUCTIVE
DEDUCTIVE
CORRELATIVE
INGRESSIVE PROCESS
READING
LISTENING
Skills of reading gestures, faces, signs, symbols
Reacting to word word images through "free" association
Determining meaning and motives of writers
Becoming aware of form and style
Appreciation of literature & oratory
Discriminating facts
Receiving meanings and motives
Share enjoyments and interpretations of literature. Explore deeper meanings in allegory, symbolism, stream of consciousness. Explore techniques
Reacting to word sounds and voice qualities
Skills of hearing sounds, tones, rhythms
Provide examples of form and styles. Develop notions of conventions, criteria and media
Widening Range of Educated Perception
Question reactions to literature in terms of interpretations and reaction
Provide stimuli and experience for increasing perceptions
Teacher
LANGUAGE MOTIVES
AUTISTIC
COMMUNICATIVE
ANALYTIC
ESTHETIC
EXPRESSIVE PROCESS
SPEAKING
WRITING
Action
Skills of making sounds, tones, pitch, rhythm
Provide stimuli. Be available but do not probe or evaluate.
Provide tasks and problem. Question performance as valid presentation of ideas students wish to communicate.
Indicate errors in communication form and style. Question means of furthering student motives through reworking
Provide self as audience by sharing esthetic reaction to student work
Not usually school connected
Widening Range of Educated Performance
Presenting ideas and feelings to listeners
Skills of forming letters, words, phrases, sentences
Writing to release ideas and emotions
Writing to a reader audience
Public speaking
Writing in forms and style
creative speaking & writing
TEACHING REACTIONS
RECEPTIVE
CORRECTIVE
EVALUATIVE
APPRECIATIVE

A STRUCTURE FOR THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE ARTS.

Charles J. Calitri, Hofstra University

preoccupied with listening to our lecture, we help them to realize that they hear much more than they think they do. All the senses need to be sharpened in this way.

The same question, "What else do you see, hear, feel?" will be asked later when they are reading a story, listening to music, watching a play, or studying a picture.

These are first steps in widening the range of educated perceptions in students. And that is one of the means of extending behavior toward the goal of full, esthetic understanding of language used by others to affect us. As they see themselves, and are made to become interested in themselves and how they are and what they do and why they do it, human beings can be awakened to a desire to continue to grow long after they have left the formal school setting.

The means which the teacher will use for involving students in an awareness of their own behavior in language arts will be inducive, intended to stimulate students to increase their perceptive abilities. The experiences provided by the teacher in this stage must be those which will call upon skills and interests already possessed, whether the student is conscious of them or not. For example, we may be relatively certain that a child has already developed an attitude, or a series of attitudes toward the mother-child relationship. We may not always be able to predict the reaction, and we may not even assume that a reaction is to be forthcoming from every child at all times. We may, however, recognize certain common experiences among a particular group of children in a particular class, in a particular section of a state, in a particular nation, at a particular time. If we present to such a class a photograph of a mother and child in some relationship, we may expect a number of reactions from our students. If the scene is one of tenderness, we expect it to evoke a reaction of recognition first, then perhaps identification, and even, in some, envy. What we wish to do at this stage, is to evoke <u>any</u> reaction, and to help the student become aware of reacting and through that, of an interacting self. We say, therefore, "Look at this photograph. What does it make you feel? Don't try to tell me, just think about what you are feeling as you look at it."

For at this point, since we are in the autistic phase, we do not expect, nor even want the student to report. The leap between feeling and thinking vague sensations and thoughts, and formulating them into words that will communicate those feelings and thoughts is a tremendous one, fraught with difficulty. The concern of the student over, "What to say that the teacher will accept and mark me well on," almost has to interfere with the thinking, until a facility for that kind of translation has developed. And there can be no adequate communication in the symbols of language until thoughts are sensed and transformed into meanings so that specific words can be assigned to them.

"Listen and think," we say to the student. "Look and think. Read and think." And by think we also mean feel, but we want them to think about their feelings too. All of these assignments by the teacher are meant to feed the autistic motives of the student. We are really saying, "Look how much you can enjoy what you are doing." And this is true even when the feelings and the thoughts stimulated by the events we bring them into contact with are painful ones, touching memory associations that were once sorrow or hurt, but the recalling must include the ability to shut off the emotion by distraction. There is a time in the lives of many young people when they enjoy "wallowing in self-pity." It is the secret weapon of the soap-opera melodramatist operating on the immature and the tragedian operating on the more mature.

What develops with maturity is that ability of the human being to control awareness of these emotions. The development of such sophistication proceeds along with the growing facility of the student to incorporate autistic feelings in to the later phases of communication, analysis, and esthetics.

When the teacher can successfully evoke this kind of self-awareness providing stimuli through situations that will tickle a desire to respond and an interest in experimenting with writing for the self's sake, then no effort to collect, read, correct or even evaluate the writing can take place. We say, "Write whatever you want, use whatever words you want, and in any combinations, grammatical or not. Just get down on paper what is inside of you wanting to come out."

We have to acknowledge to them that we know that there are other ways for such feelings to be expressed. There are inchoate screamings and the wild thrashing about of a tantrum. There are also ways of making sounds wonderfully expressive to the self on the keys of a piano. There is music not written, nor even improvised, out of a deep knowledge of musical relationship, just the banging on the keys for anger, or the stroking of long and soft notes for tenderness, deep, resonating ones for death, and high tinkling ones for felicity. Whatever sounds have become associated with particular emotions for a single purpose in a single individual, those sounds are also the symbols for expressing those emotions.

The same is true for using color and line. Wild splashes can be anger. Yellow is soft. Red is violent. Blue is night and stillness and cool. Not for everyone, this assignment of symbols, any more than we can universalize musical noises, though now and then we can find a common system among a group of students, all conditioned by similar experiences in a common society. When we can discover such a system we have made easier the later task of establishing the existence of language conventions which have to be learned. Let it be made clear at this point that many students, indeed most students, are already aware of the conventions. Many of them are already bound in by the rules.

which have governed their use of language for the first six to ten years of their formal schooling. For them the need is to break loose the conventions, to become aware that the mind does not have to react grammatically. "Look," we say to those, "just write whatever comes into your brain. And when you are finished, then read it over if you want, or burn it because you don't want anyone to see it by mistake, or you may not want to look at it yourself. It came out of you and it can be thrown away because all we want you to experience is the feeling of getting it out on paper."

Those who fear that such stimulation may be skirting the edges of psychoanalysis are probably right, and there is danger here. But there is danger also in the unconscious statements a teacher makes in front of a class. For that reason, the stimuli which the teacher uses must be screened carefully so that they are at the same time meaningful and dangerless. This is not easy, simply because it aims at the center from which language use proceeds, the emotions and their involvement with the brain. However, any knowledgeable teacher is aware that in most students, the defenses against being hurt by psychostimulations have been operating in all reading or even oral communicative experiences. Either that, or we have been teaching out of ignorance for generations, or we have not really touched any student deeply enough to make any differences in behavior.

Writing for autistic purposes is the first effort to affect the development of educated performances. We do not, ordinarily make use of the autistic motive in encouraging sound production, although sometimes, in kindergarten, a teacher will permit a class to give vent to feelings in shouts or random singing. Later, however, when we have reached the stages of communication and esthetics, we will examine the autistic as part of the meaningful reading of a poem aloud, or the saying of a speech or even the effort to convince in a conversation. And we may suggest that there is fun in singing in the shower, or talking to one's self just to hear sounds but the performance does not usually issue from the same complex of symbol systems that autistic writing does.

We do listen for autistic purposes, however. We can be pleased with the mellow droning of a voice, excited by the meaningless sounds of a dictionary or telephone book when an accomplished actor is reading it, where the words are not communicative but the tones are. And we read for autistic purposes, again not concerned with deriving meanings, but merely receiving the stimulations which touch associative memories and other structures in out brain cells.

The teacher makes use of autistic reading by again inducing the student to read and to be aware of personal feelings and thoughts. We say, "Just read and see what happens to you while you are reading." The stories selected for this purpose must be stories of impact, those

which make possible meaningful responses, and that means emotional responses. "Watch yourself reacting," we say, having first given one or two illustrations. The illustrative experiences begin with the kinds of reactions students can easily become aware of in themselves. Certain pieces of modern dance music cause them to move their legs and their shoulders. Why? What do they feel inside themselves that finds its way out in the physical gyrations and tremors which they call dancing? Have they ever felt sadness during a television play or a movie? Why? And did they enjoy it?

They talk about rhythms to which they respond. They might discuss their feelings about sorrow and death, and in the discussion we can point to those emotions which human beings seem to share because of physical and cultural similarities.

When we turn them to short stories for autistic experiences, we are encouraging each student to read in an individual way, with no attempt to force anyone to find ideas and feelings that are being directed by the author. If we ask them to record their reactions with one word clues, it is not because we wish to examine them, or grade them; it is because we wish them, again, to see themselves reacting, thinking: being alive, if you wish.

When we move to the second aspect of language motives the communicative, there is a shift of emphasis. Now, human beings are using language to transfer a feeling or a thought from ones body and brain into someone else's body and brain. This interchange requires that there be some medium, understood by both parties, containing symbols and order. But the symbols and order need not be of such a nature that they can be understood by anyone outside the circle of those among whom the communication is expected to take place. For that reason misspellings, provincialisms, ungrammatical constructions and other violations of language decor are not important, unless they interfere with the communication itself. A misspelling that changes the meaning of a sentence is important, just because it operates against the writer's motive, namely, to be understood. Punctuations which alter meanings need to be noted for the same reason, and provincialisms which are not understood by the reader of the communication must be eliminated.

Thus, the teacher operating in the communicative stage does have the responsibility of helping the student to see clearly the inadequacies of the work. When one comes with a piece written for autistic purposes, asking that it be read (and there are always students who do want to be read) the answer ought to be, "I will if you want me to, but have you written it so that I will understand it, or is it written so that only you can understand it? If you didn't have me in mind as your audience when you were writing it, you may have to make changes."

The changes are a movement from language for self to language for someone else. In speech, as in writing, it is the audience and the relationship between speaker and listener, that determines the kind of language utilized. If two boys are talking together on a street corner, the range of their vocabulary is unlimited. It may begin with certain grunts and groans and hand gestures which have meaning for both of them, and may extend as far as the most sophisticated of stylistic construction. The determinant is the ability of each partner in the communication to derive meanings that work.

Even in the classroom, such language use does not include adherence to prescribed rules of grammar and usage. The restrictions are imposed by the language conventions of the particular moment, and by the student's understanding of a social situation where certain words, permissible on the street corner are likely to be disturbing in the classroom. Most young people learn quickly and outside of school that such words offend and for that reason interfere with communication.

There are other skills which begin to acquire importance in this stage. One almost needs to understand the logic of a small community in order to communicate within that community. This is still not a matter of laws, or styles, or fixed rules. It is a matter of local agreements, because as one begins to want to exchange thoughts and feelings with others, one is forced to widen the circle of meaning and to find ways of restricting the wild, self-meaningful utterances to those noises which have meaning for others. As the circle widens the conventions become more restrictive.

We say, therefore, "If you want to be understood by people who live outside our neighborhood, then you will have to eliminate words that have meaning only here, among us. If you want to be understood by people in England, then you will have to eliminate, or change, words that are understandable only in America."

Note that at all times, the underlying strain is human behavior with language. It is what we wish to do with our words that determines how we will put them together.

When we turn to the Impressive or Ingressive processes in the communicative motive, what is wanted is a deriving of meanings from the listening and the reading. It is not enough now to receive stimuli to which we respond, or react for our own sakes only. Now we are concerned with receiving that which the speaker or writer intends us to receive. The skills to be developed are skills of interpretation and understanding and these require that the listener or reader deepen the awareness of reacting by considering those reactions in terms of the motives of the speaker or writer, as expressed in the particular choice of words and phases which compose the work.

Again, the conventions are determined by the width of the communicating circle. How much does the student have in common with the writer of a story? Our teaching of Shakespeare is defeated, all too often, because we are deceived into thinking that a mere translation of an obsolete term into its modern equivalent will suffice. What needs to be translated is the entire range of experiences from which Shakespeare derives his meanings for the words he uses. The reading of authors like Hawthorne, Melville, or even Poe requires several levels of preparation before it can be effectively done. And it is not only the language that needs to be learned, but the customs and the traditions and the values and the ways of thinking that are different from those of the classroom readers. The differences have to be examined if there is to be real communication, otherwise we are forced into teaching on a non-meaning level, where questions are answered by a repetition of words in the text, where the words themselves have nothing to give but high grades in a marking book.

There are communications which go beyond the cognitive into the emotionally evocative. Receiving emotions intended by the writer is taught through examinations of writer and reader purposes, which again is seen as human behavior with language. Children learn to respond to tones in writing as well as in speech. They can read anger as well as hear it, but only when they have learned that skill. "When your mother shouts at you, telling you to get lost, does she really mean those words, or is she saying 'you've made me angry'?" "When one boy curses at another, saying a bad word, does he mean the word itself? Or is he merely telling how he feels?" (And bad here is being used within a convention, because at some time or other we ought to let our students know that words cannot be good or bad except as using makes them so.)

When students have accepted the pleasure to be derived from the autistic uses of language, and have understood the communicative purposes, they can be led to see that language serves a third motive, the analytic. We use language to describe the events in the world of which we are a part. We use language to create categories by which we examine and come to understand what we can experience and describe. We use language to develop the abstractions we are capable of making, by extensions of our descriptions and categorizations from things experienced by our nervous system into things beyond experiencing. The awareness of this process and of some of the more formal methods of achieving our ends can result from our understanding of the formal disciplines of grammars, regardless of whether we work through traditional Latin-base systems, or the newer systems of the various linguistics.

That there is order to the human use of language cannot be denied, just as it cannot be denied that there is order of some kind in the human use of food. The particular order may be, for the most part, a

development of culture and civilization, but to the extent that we can determine certain apparent laws and generalizations of linguistic behavior, just so much can we expect to pass on to our students, when it becomes necessary, and it becomes necessary only when we have helped them to see the need for such knowledge. To insist upon standards because, there must be standards, is to cajole, tautologies which can never convince. To support such insistence, educators develop the penalty system of testing and marking deliberately utilizing fear as motive. A more reasonable structure is based upon the motives which have already been developed in the context of a given culture. The same must be said of rhetoric and criticism. They are not 'a priori' systems to be obeyed in order to avoid punishment. Rather, these forms of analyzing speech and literature are to be introduced only when they become necessary for the deeper understanding of the author's style and method. And the need itself must become as much a part of the student's awareness as it is of the teacher's.

As one wishes to communicate with wider and wider audiences, one has to restrict the use of language to the conventions which are more broadly understood among the users of the language in all parts of the world. But as one widens the geographical areas in which the audiences are located, one also narrows the number of individuals who are prepared to understand. Though the languages of the mathematics have become more universal than any other languages used by man, they are also capable of being understood, in the highest reaches of their expression, by the smallest number of international users. On the level of daily use, however, numbers are used almost universally. To do this they have been made more restrictive than words, so that meanings are precise and clear and contained within the systems invented by humans and studied by other humans who wish to receive and give communication mathematically because of the kinds of expressions made possible only by those systems.

This is also true for some users of the language tongues and scripts. There are forms and styles which serve specific purposes. The relationship between the motive and the writer and the method of his writing can be taught. The relationship between the nature of the event to be dealt with in the writing and the kind of writing attempted can also be shown. And this process can be directed toward the notion that the subject matter being taught and the motive for the teaching both direct the methods by which the teaching is to be done.

Why, then, does a poet write the way he does? What is accomplished with such a subtle use of language that cannot be accomplished in prose which is usually easier to understand? These are student questions. The first experiences with poetical forms for many students were probably those jingled repetitions of sound which they made up as little children learning words. If they have become name-conscious, and if language games are part of their world, then Charlie-

Parley, Joey-Moey, Amy-Lamie, are the inventions they use for amusement and also as ways of remembering. They learn that some words "go" with other words, because of sound usually, although sometimes because of a confluence of ideas. The poet uses this knowledge to express ideas and feelings which prose cannot express as well.

Later, as language use develops with the increase of experiences in life itself, and the mind becomes aware of many kinds of relationships, of distinctions and congruencies, language amusement is extended to include being told stories, and then being read to, and finally reading. In the same way, language has been developed as a means of being directed by those who, in the culture, are authorized to direct. The child's parents "give" orders, instructions, warnings, encouragements, suggestions. They also seek information, wanting to know how the child feels, thinks, wants. Gradually children come to know the forms of statements. They learn to distinguish more than tone or th gesture which accompanies the sound. The words are different, or differently used for different purposes.

In the analytical stage then, it is time to introduce the study of forms. There have been stories, and essays, and poems, and plays in the experiences of the student. If they have been experienced in ways consonant with the motives of their writing, they have been communicating the thoughts and feelings which the writers desired communicated. Now we are concerned with the "formalities" of styles and forms. It is a province of the analytical stage to be proscriptive, to teach deductively, presenting such forms and styles for analysis and for imitation. We say, "Read this poem. React to it. Recall your reaction. What does it communicate to you? What does it communicate to other people? What might we say the author wanted to communicate" Was it successful? How was it done? "And it is with the last question that we must deal in this stage of analysis. Obviously, then, induction is still present as a means of bringing understanding of forms, but we go further into deductions when we apply the laws of sonnets for example to new sonnets, or when we single out a work to determine whether it is an Aristotelian tragedy or not, or when we classify an essay as "familiar."

The final stage and motive is the accumulation of the first three, and we call it the esthetic motive. The reader or listener has learned to read and to listen because there is pleasure involved in the awareness of self and of reacting. One has learned that there is a need to receive communication, to understand because one has read and listened analytically, and because one has learned to derive intended messages through a knowledge of words and structures. One has learned that there are forms and styles and ways of examining them and what is being said, but also what is being done to the self that goes beyond the meanings of words into the emotions aroused by language. And, if we have succeeded, one reaches that final stage of language use, wherein one enjoys the entire process, is

capable of evaluating a work in terms of what we call its esthetic achievement. This is where the teacher and the students regard a work together, sharing enjoyments and ideas, bringing multiple experiences to bear on the enrichment of the listening and reading.

In the same way, the student has learned to write for its own sake, and to communicate ideas to others, to widen the circle of audience to include not only those who understand their own provincial jargon but also those who are capable of working in the more formal world of English by separating themselves from their own jargons. Students have learned that they can describe, and categorize and conclude and evaluate in speech and in writing. And again, if we have succeeded, they have developed an ability to enjoy performing in language and sharing performance with those who have learned to appreciate. The work becomes, for the teacher, one more poem, or essay, or short story to be appreciated in the sharing of the group. And this sharing, as it contributes to the acquisition of new knowings, is our goal. It may even be considered the final justification for human beings behaving in language.

The structure, as presented here, can be entered into at any stage of student development. With students who have already acquired a sophisticated use of language, who are capable of writing clearly, stylistically, one wonders whether they have ever been permitted to experience an autistic moment, when what they have written has had no other motive than expression. It may be that they will require less experience of this kind to serve as a means of freeing them and helping them to become aware of their own processes. With those disadvantaged children whose language use has been restricted to grunts, groans, moans, and occasional namings, much more time has to be spent helping them to learn that they are capable of reacting, that their reactions can be stimulated, and that those reactions can come out of language experiences.

The stages, we have said, are cumulative. They are also intermingled, so that some analysis takes place even as the child begins to look at personal reactions and at autistic writings, because, from the very beginning of experience, reading faces from the crib, the child has been noting similarities and differences and has been making conclusions about meaning.

To summarize in terms of teacher behavior: writings done for autistic purposes are not even to be read, unless a student requests it. And then, they must not be corrected or evaluated, or responded to in any way, unless such responses are directly called for by the student. One must not say "I don't understand it." One can say only, "I know you did not write it for me to understand, did you?" And this must be said in such a way that absolutely no criticism is implied. No "points" can be deducted where a student has not been trying for "points."

Writings done for communicative purposes must be corrected only in so far as they fail to serve the purpose for which they were intended. To correct spelling when it does not interfere with communication is to change the emphasis from meaning to form. One says, "I do not know what you mean here. Can you change it to make it clear?" Or, "I think I know what you mean, but I don't think you're saying it so that there is no possible chance of misunderstanding."

Writings done for formal, analytical purposes are subject to all kinds of correction and evaluation. Here we have said form is important. Now we may call attention to errors in form. The errors either restrict communication, or they inhibit appreciation, or they carry with them the image of one who is less than well-educated in the opinions and according to the standards of the better educated language community. Thus, if a student is motivated to care about the image his work projects, the teacher is authorized to reject failures and to help improvement.

Implicit in this approach to the teaching of the language arts, is the contract between teacher and students. Each expectation is clearly understood and the teacher responds within the terms of the contract to performances made under the terms of the contract. It is not permissible for a teacher to solicit opinions from the students and then mark opinions wrong. Neither is it permissible for a teacher to say, "I want you to write what you feel, because that is what is important," and then correct or mark down spelling and grammar. On the other hand, when we have included in the terms of the contract such techniques as style and form, then there are no limits to the kinds of standards the teacher wishes to impose other than the abilities of at least the best of the students to perform, to behave in language.